

complete

Thoughts for the New Year

The Catholic Mind

W H C

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Man for God

TIMOTHY BROSNAHAN, S.J.

WHENCE CAME I?

THIS is the ultimate and all-important question of life, philosophy and religion. I know that some years since, a bushel of wheat or an English sparrow was of more importance in the eyes of the world than I. No one thought of me; I was the object of no one's love nor hatred nor indifference. Now, I have existence and shall have forever; the foundation of every gift of being, a mind whose capacity transcends conditions of time and space, a heart with a restless and unsatisfied hunger for happiness, and a capacity for union with Infinite Goodness, an imagination whose range is illimitable, and a soul wherein is lodged a mysterious and autocratic monitor that dictates what I may or may not do, that, through the approbation or remorse it excites, can bestow the highest pleasure of acutest pain.

What is the origin of the nature I possess? There is but one answer. Not faith only, but reason as well forbids me to accept the puerile theories of those who find the origin of our spiritual and immortal souls in the primal forces of dead unthinking matter, and would claim for that matter itself an omnipotence, which reason does not allow us to attribute even to God—the power of producing something infinitely greater than itself. We can give no satisfactory, reasonable or adequate answer, until we say in the words of Genesis that God created man to His image and likeness. See 2 Mach. vii. 22, 23, 28.

We are, therefore, the handiwork of God. Our bodies were formed through those powers and processes of generation with which He endowed living matter when He called the world and the fullness thereof out of nothingness. Our souls, when their vesture of clay, formed out of the slime of the earth, was prepared to receive the breath of life, were by an immediate fiat of His omnipotent will brought into existence. We are creatures of

God and belong to Him in a manner which no comparison drawn from the relations between created things can entirely illustrate. The sovereign has a right to the loyalty of his subject; the master to the service of his slave; the father to the submission of his child; the Maker to the work of his hand. We acknowledge God to be our sovereign, master, father, maker; and only through lower and defective analogies do we express the dominion of the Creator over His creatures.

CHARACTER OF OUR DEPENDENCE

The dominion of God over us is *universal*. "For of Him, and by Him and in Him, are all things" (Rom. xi. 36). Everything in me is God's, every fibre of my being, my body and soul, my every faculty, all my actions, the most fleeting thought. I am God's at all times, at every age; on all occasions; at every moment; in every situation. This truth theologians expressed by saying that we are contingent beings; that is to say, beings who have two attributes: (i.) who out of absolute nothingness have been called to existence in response to the will of the Creator, and (ii.) who are kept in existence by that same will; beings whose nature is insufficient of itself to exist even after it is created, who would fall again into nothingness if not sustained by the omnipotent power that created them; beings who are as it were shadows of an infinite necessary and self-sustaining being, cast on a background of nothingness, who had not only to be lifted out of the void of nothingness, but must now and forever be supported above the abyss of nothingness, lest they should fall again into the primeval night of non-existence; beings whose existence is like the note of an organ, lasting while God's fingers are on the keys. Conservation, as we know, is the creative act unceasingly continued. Creation is not an act which was once performed at the dawn of time and from which the Creator then ceased. The omnipotence of God could not create a being, which once created, would be wholly or even in part self-sustaining. God is creating us today and at this moment, as truly as He created the heavens and earth in the beginning.

But we are not only beings whose natures God created out of nothing and conserves out of nothing; we are be-

ings who would be incapable of exercising any faculty of mind or body without a concurrent exercise of divine activity. When we pray or labor or teach or take food or converse or commit sin, the physical action by which these actions are performed is possible only because God cooperates, work with us. We cannot praise and serve Him without His cooperation; we have never sinned against Him without our physical action being sustained by divine concurrence—"All things were made by Him, and without Him was made nothing that was made" (St. John i. 3). No sin of the tongue, of the eyes, of the imagination, of the mind has ever been committed that the creature has not made use of the omnipotence of the Creator to outrage Him. The sinner while sinning must be supported in existence and the physical acts by which he sins must be sustained while he is sinning. "What hast thou that thou hast not received? And if thou hast received, why dost thou glory [*i. e.*, why dost thou exalt thyself], as if thou hadst not received" (1 Cor. iv. 7). "The fool said in his heart there is no God" (Ps. lii. 1), and every man who exercises a dominion over his soul or body or any faculty of either which attempts to withdraw them ever so little or for ever so short a time from the universal dominion of God, practically and in so far, says in his heart, "There is no God."

The dominion of God over us is *absolute*, unconditioned, unqualified, unrestricted by aught save His wisdom, justice and sanctity. He can give me health or sickness, a long or a short life, this destiny or that, these endowments of mind or those, this occupation or that, these passions or those. I am all His; therefore, I am wholly in His hands; not my will, but His, not my interest, aims or endeavors, but His divine providence disposes me and all things in accord with the plans that were formed from eternity, antecedently to the decree of creation. See Rom. ix. 20; Isaias xlvi. 9; Wisdom xv. 7; Jer. xviii. 1-6.

The dominion of God over us is *essential*. God cannot dispossess Himself of it; neither can man cast it off. God need not have created me, but once I am created, I must necessarily belong to Him. He might, if it pleased Him, withdraw His sustaining hand, but God would cease to be God, if man became absolute master of any created thing, or more than a steward of his slightest thought or

his most transient emotion. Man may by his words, by his actions or by his thoughts arrogate to himself a mastery over himself which a creature cannot possess. But willingly or unwillingly he is a subject of God's universal and absolute dominion. He may choose to acknowledge that dominion in the beatific joy of eternal love or in the everlasting retribution of eternal justice; but he may never hope to find a corner of the universe where he can escape from the law of his nature. See Ps. cxxxviii. 7-12; Esther xiii. 9.

Whence came I therefore? I came from God; I am proceeding from Him continually as a ray of being from an infinite fount of being. In Him I live and move and have my being; on Him I depend for existence for life, for every vital activity. I belong therefore to God—to God solely—to God always—and wholly to God.

PURPOSE OF MY EXISTENCE

Our creation could not be a necessary act, one namely to which the infinitely all perfect God was compelled by the exigencies of His nature or attributes. This would be a denial of His inward self-sufficiency and an assertion of His need of outward activity to complete the perfection of His existence. "Thou art my God," says David, "because Thou hast no need of my goods" (Ps. xv. 2). And in the Apocalypse, the four and twenty ancients are described as falling down before Him that sitteth on the throne, "Him that liveth forever and ever" and as casting their crowns before the throne and saying; "Thou art worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory, and honor and power, because Thou hast created all things, and for Thy will they were and have been created" (Apoc. iv. 11).

Neither on the other hand could it be an arbitrary and purposeless act, because as such it would be incompatible with God's supreme intelligence and absolute holiness of will. It was therefore a divine act performed for a reason worthy of infinite wisdom and an infinite holiness. Strictly speaking, this reason, though it exhibits the purpose of creation cannot assign the motive for it. The infinite God of holiness and wisdom acted for a purpose, but could not act from a motive. We may indeed say that God was moved by His goodness to create; but

His goodness is Himself; and a motive is a cause independent of the will that is moved by it, and implying want in that will. The purpose of the creative act could not be the offspring of want, because God has the plenitude of being, and the fullness of perfection, and dwells eternally in infinite beatitude; and because even if desire arising from want were possible to this infinitely perfect God, no created being could satisfy it, since all created things however rich in finite perfections are only shadows and images of perfections already possessed by the Creator.

The only conceivable reason why God created, the only one that would befit His nature was the motiveless purpose of diffusing His own inexhaustible perfections, of manifesting without Himself "the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God" (Rom. xi. 34) and the depth of the riches of His love and goodness. His only purpose was to communicate being in such a way as to reveal Himself in creatures and to creatures, and by creatures. The purpose of His creation, therefore, entailed the existence not only of beings that would exhibit passively in orderly and graded sequence and in various degrees the excellence and beauty of their Creator, but the existence of beings also capable of reading the book of creation, of interpreting its revelation, of actively proclaiming in thought, in word and deed the perfections and goodness which their Creator wished to manifest. Such creatures therefore would be endowed with faculties adapted to and destined for this purpose; would have impressed on their nature an impulse so to employ them and would find the satisfaction of their being in so employing them and frustration of their being in using them for any other purpose than that to which, by the decree of their creation, they are adapted, and for which they are destined. They will, as a consequence, have an intellect capable of knowing the truth and a will capable of loving the good, a free-will capable through self-activity of choosing their course of conduct, and a radical and inextinguishable craving for the satisfaction of these capabilities that will leave them restless until they are sated by knowing Him who is the source and exemplar of all truth, and of loving Him the fount and plenitude of all goodness and beauty.

We are those creatures, whom God has created a little less than angels, on whom He has bestowed faculties

that place us at the summit of His visible creation, in order that we may be the prophets, seers and priests of His revelation, in order that we may know Him, and knowing Him, love Him, and loving Him, praise Him with the service of mind and heart and body. "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God with thy whole mind, with thy whole heart and with all thy strength" is the first and greatest of the commandments, because it is the expression of the primary purpose of our creation. We are existing for one purpose only—in order to glorify our Creator. If we fulfil that purpose, that is to say, if during this probationary existence, we direct all our actions to the promotion of God's eternal glory, we shall finally in the beatific vision of our Creator's internal glory obtain that fullness of existence which we call eternal life—we shall save our souls. If we fail to fulfil the purpose of our existence, we shall it is true, glorify God passively, in so far as we shall be revelations of God's justice; but we shall not glorify God vitally, for we shall lose our souls, the life of the spirit will be extinct in us; we shall be dead souls. We may have during our life in these tabernacles of clay gained the whole world, but we have lost for eternity not merely that which we gained during life but ourselves.

But the further question presents itself: Why did God create *me*? Could not the Almighty Creator have obtained the same or a greater measure of glory through other possible beings? If we reflect on the long series of antecedent causes through which we were brought into existence, of the numberless accidents that might have broken one of the links in that series and so have prevented our existence, of the chances that might have diverted the line of our ancestry to other issues, of the circumstances that by special Providence concurred through many generations to the production of our being; it is manifest that we personally were throughout the past reaches of eternity present in the foreknowledge of God, the object of His love, complacency, benevolence, the pre-destined instruments of His divine designs, that we are not mere chance waifs floating down the stream of life, but men elected from all eternity as ministers of God's glory, chosen to do a special work at a special time in the unfolding of human history, in a specific way.

What that predetermined measure and mode of glory

is which we are destined from all eternity to procure we know from our vocation. Why we were chosen to our particular vocation we do not know; we can only bow our heads in humility and acknowledge that we were chosen to glorify God at this age of the world, in this country, and that by failing to do so we shall lose our souls. See Ps. cxv. 16-18; Judith xvi. 16, 17.

The World for Man

TIMOTHY BROSNAHAN, S.J.

PURPOSE OF CREATURES

WHY were all other things than man created? If we distinguish between the active promotion of God's glory and the passive promotion of the same, it is evident that only rational creatures can actively give glory to God. All other creatures, therefore, were created not to know their Creator, but to make Him known; not to love their Creator, but to manifest His goodness; not to render to Him the immediate service of free intelligence, but blindly and of necessity, following the laws of their natures to be instruments in the employment of the only visible rational creatures that are adapted and destined to the immediate service of God. They are to promote God's glory passively, in so far as they are dumbly telling the glory of God, declaring themselves the work of His hand and proclaiming His wisdom and love. They are means, not agents; man is agent to direct them to good or to evil.

A great ocean steamer reaches its destination through the means of, but not by the agency of, the physical energies that are expended in its propulsion across the trackless ocean. Those same tremendous powers through which it is finally brought to its haven, might, if not controlled, by the untiring vigilance and the expert skill of the engineer, utterly destroy it in mid-sea, and if not directed by a pilot who knows the chart by which he must navigate, and faithfully follows the path it prescribes, would wreck it on some barren and inhospitable shore. Poets and sages tell us that our life is a voyage; and it

is not always nor generally a voyage in a canal-boat wherein we glide securely and irresponsibly between parallel banks drawn by safe tandem mules to a certain destination. It is on the contrary a perilous voyage across a freakish and treacherous sea towards a far distant haven, and they only arrive at last, who have learned to use wisely, to control with self-restraint, to direct with self-mastery, the blind forces and impulses of nature that are equally capable of bringing ruin and disaster or of subserving success and triumph; who attending to the "light that shineth in a dark place"—the light of faith illumining the chart of reason—have learned to guard against the myriad frailties of the pilot and the myriad dangers of the deep. To each of us is committed a tremendous responsibility. We are to navigate across the sea of life a stately ship of infinite worth, watched for on the shores of eternity by Christ. The destruction or wrecking of that ship moreover may entail the loss not only of our own souls, but of many others, the loss to God not only of that wealth of glory committed to us, but of that committed to others we should have saved.

Of us it may be said in a preeminent sense: "Thou hast made him a little less than the angels, and hast set him over the works of Thy hands. Thou hast subjected all things under his feet" (Ps. viii. 6). This may be said of all of us, whether our influence is exerted over others by words or actions, immediately by personal intercourse or remotely by example or cooperation. The right or wrong use we individually make of creatures tells in the general effect. It first affects our personal sanctity and then indirectly others. The worldly-minded man radiates worldliness, the imperfect or selfish man infects the whole body and lowers its spiritual tone and vitality. That responsibility we cannot shirk, because we were created. We cannot, therefore, err in the use of creatures, we cannot be careless or apathetic in applying them to the purpose of our creation, without sacrificing the glory of God in manifold ways. Every creature of God, therefore, was created for our use, and we were created for the glory of God. Whenever we use any creature, however trifling it may seem for any other purpose than either directly or indirectly to know God or make Him known; to love Him or make Him loved; to serve Him ourselves or make

Him be served by others, we are exercising a dominion over things that belong only to the supreme Lord, the Creator of all things. There is not only rapine in our holocaust; there is theft of the materials of sacrifice. Like Saul, we invade the sanctuary of creation, and offer the holocaust and peace-offerings for our own comfort and self-satisfaction; like Saul we may hear the word of God declaring that we are not men according to His heart and that our kingdom which was to be established forever over Israel will not now continue. We have been chosen for reasons known only to the infinite wisdom of God to be His stewards in the storehouse of His creation, a derivative and participate proprietorship has been bestowed on us; and whenever we use the least of God's creatures—a word, a thought, a moment of time, a trifling material object—for any purpose than that for which it was created, we assert a dominion over them that is independent of God, a proprietorship that is absolute—and are in so far dishonest stewards and rebellious servants.

PRINCIPLES FOR GUIDANCE

Now, these are the simple principles which are to guide us in the use of creatures; but these principles require for their constant, uniform and universal application a heroic self-control and loyalty. Let us classify these creatures in order that we may the more recognize the difficulties to be overcome, and the helps we may make use of. These creatures may be classified into two main categories: (a) my own nature and faculties; (b) things external thereto. My nature: "What is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him? For Thy magnificence is elevated above the heavens . . . Thou hast made him a little less than the angels; Thou hast crowned him with glory; Thou hast set him over the works of Thy hands" (Ps. viii. 2, 4, 6). See Gn. i. 26, 27; ii. 7; Job. xiv. 12; Ps. lxxxix. 6; Eccles. xiv. 18; 1 Peter i. 24; James i. 9-11; Is. xl. 6, 7, 8.

From these texts two things are evident: First, that man is an exalted being, only a little less than the angels, the image and likeness of the immortal and invisible God. Secondly, that man is akin to the slime of the earth, fellow to "the beast that takes his license in the field of time,

unfettered by the sense of crime." What am I? A little less than an angel, a little better than a brute; dust and ashes informed by the breath of God; a spirit gifted with an intellect to know the sublimest truths and a will to love the highest good, but at the same time an animal fashioned from clay with tendencies and impulses to the slime out of which it was made. An intelligence with cravings and longings towards ideals of infinite beauty, goodness and truth; but a body with inclinations and passions making for vileness, falseness and vanity.

What am I? The pagans were so convinced of the importance of an answer to this question that they considered as an oracle the imperative of Thales: "Know thyself," and numbered him among the seven wise men of Greece. And when they built a temple at Delphi to Apollo, they engraved above its entrance the same legend. They recognized the fundamental character of the problem, but never found the solution of it.

Our own nature, therefore, with its faculties and appetites, with all its weaknesses and rebel inclinations to evil, with all its possibilities for noble aspirations and deeds; with that underlying and ineradicable and imperious instinct for happiness—a happiness that cannot be attained until the higher and dominant needs and desires of our nature are satisfied—our own complex and warring nature is the principal and most difficult creature to use in accordance with the end of our creation. Let us, therefore, study ourselves, acknowledging that such as we are, we are the work of God's hands. He might have made us different; He might have put a greater harmony between our higher and lower nature; but He willed that our life should be a warfare; that with and through the nature He gave we should know Him, love Him, and serve Him, and thus save our souls. We should therefore study with great attention the use we have hitherto made of our faculties and appetites, reviewing in detail the faculties of our body, the senses and their appetites, the faculties of the mind, our intellect with its aptitudes and instincts, our imagination and memory, the faculties of will, our higher and lower impulses, the conflict between the dictates, the suggestions and stirrings of conscience and the cravings and allurements of passions.

Things external to us. In like manner review the

creatures external to us, reflecting that the employment of them for a purpose at variance with the end of their creation is an abuse not only of their nature, but of our own as well. These creatures may be put into four classes: (i.) Spiritual creatures given to us for our supernatural sanctification; the hours of prayer and self-examination; the Sacraments of the Church, especially Penance and the Eucharist. (ii.) Intellectual creatures given to us for mental development and to fit us to cope with the intellectual powers that are leagued with the prince of darkness against Christ and His Church; the literature we read, our motive in reading it, the effects it produces on us; the novels we dawdle away our time over and the consequent intellectual flabbiness that results; the excessive and injudicious reading of newspapers, which produces a trivial habit of mind. (iii.) Bodily creatures given to us for the support of our physical life—sleep, food, drink, recreation. (iv.) Social creatures, that is the persons that we are brought into contact with either by duty, by the conditions of our lives, by choice, or by chance, and who are included by God to be helps to our salvation, or of whose salvation we ourselves are in the design of God to be instruments; our superiors, pupils, our friends and associates, whom our social activities cause us to meet.

METHOD OF USING CREATURES

Theoretically, we are familiar with the principles of reason by which a false system of Ethics, almost universally accepted, today is refuted, the utilitarian system which declares happiness to be the ultimate norm of morality and that whatever brings the greatest happiness and because it brings the greatest happiness is good, and that everything is evil in proportion to the unhappiness it brings. We know theoretically that happiness or pleasure of some kind, at least the pleasure and comfort of a good conscience is the consequence of the right use of creatures. We know that every creature of God, because it is in some measure a participation of God's infinite perfections, possesses an attraction that is a shadow or reflex of the substantial beauty of the infinite good. But we also know theoretically that this attractiveness of creatures is not the norm or rule of their right or wrong use.

But practically if we examine ourselves we shall find that we are often utilitarians in thought, in our practical convictions, that we are widely governed by their false principles in conduct and that in words we give expression to opinions which, if analyzed, are flatly utilitarian. We estimate things not by their relation to our last end, but by the amount of comfort, pleasure, satisfaction, ease, enjoyment, absence of care, personal aggrandizement or freedom they bring. We know theoretically that God has put an adaptation between faculties and creatures in order to make their use not intolerable, but we constantly mistake in practise this adaptation to an end, for the end itself. To take so animal an action as eating as an illustration. If the taking of food and drink, which is necessary for the preservation of our physical life, were not accompanied by a sensible pleasure that hides its grossness, it would require a special commandment of God to make us perform an action with which so much physical vileness is connected; and the experience of those who through sickness have lost a taste for food shows that it would be a commandment calling for heroism in its observance. All creatures of God are attractive, of course; they must necessarily be so, since they are analogous perfections through which the perfections of the divine excellence are showing; but their attractiveness is not the measure or the motive of their use. They cannot without sin be used, whatever comfort or pleasure of mind they bring, for any other purpose than that for which they were created, namely, to contribute either directly or indirectly to the glory of God and the salvation of our souls.

What, therefore, is man's right relation to them? First, man is master. "Let him have dominion over every creature on the earth." To him, therefore, is committed for reasonable use all that God in His bounty has created. This use is threefold; in the lowest place, they are for the support and development of the body; next for the growth and perfection of his intellectual life, and thirdly for the unfolding and completion of the spiritual life. These three uses are related to one another in an orderly and ascending succession. The body is for the mind, and body and mind together are ministers of the soul. Any use of creatures, therefore, whatever benefits accrue to body or mind, which impedes or hinders the growth of the soul is

inordinate, or any use of creatures sought for the bodily or intellectual pleasure they bring, if injurious to body or mind, is inordinate. Secondly, man is the interpreter and prophet of nature. The visible things that are made are showing forth the invisible majesty of Him who made them. The beauty and mystery and sublimity of the universe are all for a purpose; and among visible creatures man only is endowed with faculties suited to interpret and proclaim that purpose. "Great are the works of the Lord, sought out according to all His wills. His work is praise and magnificence" (Ps. cx. 2, 3). It is a duty of man's soul therefore to magnify the Lord. Lastly, man is the priest of creation. "Be you also a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices" (1 Pet. ii. 5, 9). Even in the garden of Paradise the first man was commanded to exercise the spirit of sacrifice, to abstain from the use of one fruit. A similar obligation is imposed on us, as often as the use of creatures is an allurement to sin; and though it is not a duty, the character of man's natural priesthood calls on him to abstain at times from the legitimate use of creatures in order that he may thus by sacrifice acknowledge his dependent proprietorship and the supreme dominion of God. He is a master to use, a prophet to interpret, a priest to sacrifice.

All for Christ

TIMOTHY BROSNAHAN, S.J.

A PARABLE

SUPPOSE a temporal king, elected by God Himself, possessing all those kingly qualities that are attributes of a king in deed—a masterful intellect in whose wisdom and prudence his subjects could trust, a royal heart in whose self-sacrifice, fortitude and magnanimity they could confide—a king to whom all Christian people owed, by God's election, loyalty and service.

Suppose that this providentially elected king issued an address to all his people announcing: (i.) That it was his will to bring beneath his gentle sway all those who lived in the darkness of error and despotism, to extend the

blessings of peace and prosperity to those enslaved to the vicegerents of the powers of darkness; (ii.) that those who were willing to enlist in his enterprise must be ready to put up with the inconveniences in food and apparel, in marchings and weariness, in watchings and want of sleep which he the king would endure; and (iii.) that after undergoing the labors by day and the vigils by night, which the king himself would undergo during the campaign, his followers should on the glorious issue of the campaign share in the glory, honor and rewards of victory—the plaudits and gratitude of those they had redeemed from ignorance, slavery and misery, the dignities and emoluments of the kingdom of peace, the reverence and respect of their fellow-citizens, in proportion to their share of sufferings, labor and devotion for their king.

Suppose such an appeal were issued today, and that the other conditions were verified. Suppose, that is to say, that the man at the head of the government were a man chosen by Christ, living a life after Christ's own heart, inspired by Christ's principles; that the cause for which he asked our sympathy and cooperation would be successful, if men responded, and would, when successful, redound to the temporal and spiritual happiness of multitudes of our fellow men, would bring in the golden year of peace on earth to men of human brotherhood and universal prosperity. Making these suppositions, I say, what response do you think he would get from men? Suppose a noble cause presented to them a great leader embodying that cause in his own person, and calling for their love and devotion what effect would be produced? Our own history and the history of other nations tell us that such a call would stir to enthusiasm the pulses of the most torpid hearts. The man that would refuse to answer such a call would be looked upon as a vile coward and a poltroon, a wretch concentered all in self. He would be an object of national ridicule, of contempt, of obloquy. No man is so contemptible as the man that is disloyal to his country. The man that refuses to sacrifice self-interest at the call of high duty to his fellow-man, the man who refuses in the extreme moment the service of a citizen will merit universally the withering reprobation which Dante bestowed on him who made "the great refusal."

Pessimists who judge men on principles borrowed

from their own lives, tell us that the spirit of loyalty and self-sacrifice has perished among men. But is it true? The history of mankind, though in many respects fatuous and degrading, is on the whole a record of loyalty to high ideals and of sacrifice for their attainment. And if it were not so, civilization would not have endured. The philosophy of materialism, if universally accepted, would undermine the most stable civilization in a generation. So today given a noble cause, and a leader that is the embodiment of it, and the human heart would respond as instinctively as it did in the days of the Crusade, when men forsook home and native land, and faced privations and labor and suffering and death to save from desecration the place in which Christ's dead body had lain.

Men do not normally swear allegiance to an impersonal thing, least of all to an abstraction. When they seem to be devoted to a cause impersonally they are in fact worshippers of self or haters of others. The cause must be embodied in a person. The spirit of devotion to a cause, of self-sacrifice in its behalf will find its expression today in heroic loyalty to the leader and representative of the cause as readily as it did that day when the three valiant captains of Israel broke through the camp of the Philistines and drew water from the well near Bethlehem in order that they might satisfy their battle-worn king who had expressed a desire to drink of it. But to inspire such loyalty the cause must be embodied in a man like David, who took the dearly bought water and slaked with it the dust of the cave of Odollam, rather than satisfy a personal craving through means for which his captains risked their lives. Given the cause, and given the king only traitors and recreants would refuse allegiance and service.

THE PARABLE APPLIED

We have a *King*, who is a man such as we are, like to us in all things sin only excepted, with a human heart to sympathize with men in sorrow, disappointment, depression, a heart full of boundless love, of gentleness and humility, whose manhood is the highest and holiest that ever inspired allegiance, who possesses every noble, endearing and commanding attribute of mind and heart that has ever exerted a fascination over the souls of men and

evoked their passionate loyalty: "A high priest, holy, innocent and undefiled" (Heb. vii. 26). We have a King who is moreover God, who by His infinite power can aid us and supply us with every needed weapon in the enterprise He calls us to, who by His wisdom knows our necessities, by His charity and bounty is desirous of relieving them, by His liberality and magnificence shares His riches among us—a King whose mission is from God the Father, and who could say of Himself, "I am appointed King over Sion, His holy mountain, preaching His commandment. The Lord said to me: 'Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. . . . I will give Thee the gentiles for Thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for Thy possessions'" (Ps. ii. 6-8). "The King of ages, immortal, the only God" (1 Tim. i. 17), in whom "dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead corporeally? . . . who is the head of all principality and power . . . in whom are hid all the treasures of knowledge and wisdom" (Coloss. ii. 9, 10, 3), who could therefore declare, "All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. xxviii. 18), at My name "every knee shall bend in heaven, on earth and in hell" (Phil. ii. 10). We have a King who has blazed for us the path of duty, of attainment and of triumph by sufferings and tears and shedding of blood, who shed His life-blood for the realization of His cause.

Apart from revelation, could man dream of such a King? With revelation, can we desire a Lord, a Captain and a Leader of greater power, wisdom and loveableness? Was ever a leader fairer to his followers? "If any man ministers to Me, let him follow Me, and where I am, there also shall My ministers be." Shall we follow Him and how far? Has He a right to our allegiance, to our devoted loyalty, to our service? What is the extent and limits of that right? What can He ask of us that He has not done Himself and that He will not give as the grace to do? What may we refuse without becoming object of our own scorn. Can we find after searching all the realms of imagination a greater, a nobler, a more heroic or a more profitable service than His?

We have a *cause* to fight for. Our King addresses each of us individually, makes a personal appeal, asks for our personal sympathy and cooperation. He says: I wish to enter into My Kingdom promised to Me by My Father,

and foretold in prophecy; for this I became an earthly King, for this I took upon Myself a human body that I might draw all men to Me. 'I have come to cast fire on the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled' " (Luke xii. 49). I have come to set the hearts of men aflame with new hopes and enthusiasm, and "how am I straitened until it be accomplished!" I wish all men to become citizens of My kingdom, to enjoy the rights and privileges of it, to reign with Me in the freedom of grace and in the happiness of glory. I wish to alienate them from the service of My enemy and their enemy. I want the Gentiles, every man of them, to come to the knowledge and love of Me, and I want My name to be reverenced in the uttermost parts of the earth. Will you come with Me, will you enlist in My battalions? You pray daily that My kingdom may come, will you serve with Me in helping to bring about the realization of that prayer?

How shall Christ finally enter into His kingdom? He tells us: "I ask you to do nothing that I have not done, to undergo no labor that I have not undergone, to endure no labor that I have not undergone, to endure no suffering or privations that I have not endured; and I promise you a share of glory and of reward in that kingdom when it shall be established in proportion to the sacrifices and labors you have endured. Can we think of any use to put our lives to more inspiring of ambition, appealing to the highest that is in us than to use them in bringing all men to the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ, in being the agents through whom shall be effected Christ's final and complete triumph? To make the world Catholic, every man a loyal follower of Christ, to banish sin and crime, to hasten the verification of the old prophecies regarding the universal sway of Christ, prophecies which in the designs of God are to be verified only through human co-operation, through our cooperation or the cooperation of others—this surely is an enterprise that ought to fire the most sluggish hearts. "Thy Kingdom come." Symbolically Isaias describes that day as one of prosperity and peace: "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the calf, and the lion and the sheep shall abide together, and a little child shall lead them" (Is. xi. 6), and "the people shall turn the swords into ploughshares, and their spears into sickles; nations shall not lift up sword against nation,

neither shall they be exercised any more to war" (Is. ii. 4), for "a Child is born to us and a Son is given to us, and the government is upon His shoulders, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty, God . . . the Prince of Peace. His empire shall be multiplied, and there shall be no end of peace" (Is. ix. 6). The prophecies of the Old Testament have not yet been fulfilled: are awaiting fulfillment until Christ finds followers who are ready to walk in His footsteps and so to enter into glory; possibly they may never be fulfilled until the day when all, Jew and Gentile, having been "concluded in unbelief" God shall "show the riches of His mercy and glory."

Is there any man whatsoever possessing judgment and sound reason, who on hearing this appeal would not offer himself wholly to labor for such a cause? You must work either with Christ or against Him. The enemy, works, and suffers and dies and accomplishes nothing. For them labor is useless, sacrifice a pure loss, without any compensation. For them temporal death instead of being an entrance into eternal life, is the portal of eternal death. The measure of happiness and success assured to those who fight for Christ is inversely the measure of unhappiness and failure destined for those who fight against Him. "Those who are not with Me are against Me." To think that it is in our power to hasten the day, the day when Christ shall be actually King in the world, when His law shall rule in all human intercourse, shall be the underlying principle of all human legislation, and the basis of every civil constitution; when every man shall speak His endearing name with reverence and love, and regard His gracious personality with adoration and worship! To think that on each of us individually the advent of that reign of righteousness depends; that each of us individually, however humbly, may contribute to the hastening of that golden year. If a band of us were certain that we could by following Christ leave on dying this country as a conquest to the Kingdom of Christ, what would we do? What would we do if we knew that silently and obscurely we could plant the seeds in this generation that would flower into fruit in the next? What must we do? Follow Christ. Imitate Christ. How? The details do not matter for the present. Expel the old Adam out of us, begin the conversion of all men to Christ, by our own

unswerving loyalty to Him. "If you love Me keep My commandments. . . . By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you keep My commandments."

But there are some who wish to signalize themselves in imitation and service of Christ. To them He says, "If anyone will be My disciple, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me" (Mark viii. 24), that is to say if any man will be My apostle, if any man is willing not merely to labor as a soldier in My cause, but to be a knight of My round table (worthy not merely to see the Holy Grail, but to take it in his hands and to drink of it) let him put off self, the old man who is corrupted according to the desires of error, and be renewed in the spirit of his mind; let him cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let him strip himself of the old man with his deeds and put on the new, him who is renewed unto knowledge, according to the image of Him that created him (Eph. iv. 22; Col. iii. 9, 10, 12; Rom. xiii. 12). "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ" says St. Paul (Rom. xiii. 14) and in his pregnant metaphor he tells us what we must do if we wish to signalize ourselves in the service and imitation of Christ. His metaphor is taken from the life of an actor, who after hard and continuous study puts on for a few hours the person of the character that he is enacting. Consider his patient and laborious reading, his hours of reflection and brooding meditation, his endeavors to see and hear with his imagination the tone and expression of his character's voice, his carriage and bearing in the various scenes; consider his private practice and rehearsal to bring himself into sympathy with the character in order that he may for a few brief hours sink his own personality and put on before an audience the character of a Hamlet or Macbeth, and you will understand what St. Paul means by putting on Christ not merely in exterior gesture and carriage but in the spirit of our mind, so that: "with Christ am I nailed to the cross, and I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii. 20).

When we have put off the old man who is corrupted according to the desires of error, when we have put off self not merely by "fighting against," but utterly "routing and uprooting" the rebellion that arises from the pleasures of sense, the comforts of the carnal man, and the standards and allurements of the world, when we have so put on

Christ that according to the measure of grace given to us He may seem through us to be living again visibly amongst men, then shall we be loyal knights of the Kingdom that is to come. Loyalty implies three elements (a) a great cause—none is greater than ours; (b) a leader that is the embodiment of that cause—our leader is God and perfect man; (c) a *traditio cordis*, such a giving of our hearts as will refashion our intellects and souls to the image of Him who embodies the cause.

We know what one man has done to make Christ known and loved in the generation that has just past. Did he hasten the coming of the Golden Year by material splendor, wealth or strength? No; without an armed man, without a foot of ground to rule over, without a vast treasury; but merely by being a glorious follower of Christ Himself, living a life of saintly gentleness, frugality and self-sacrifice, aloof from the world in his Vatican prison, but, looking out on it with a Christlike love for it, praying for it, suffering for it, he was listened to when he spoke.

A Christlike life exercises as potent a sway, as supernatural a fascination over minds and hearts today as it ever did. It only needs to be presented to men to win them hungering for the supernatural, after their last fifty years of wallowing in the mire of materialism. The signs of the times all indicate a swinging of the pendulum back to Christianity. The world is ready for it, if it can be presented concretely in the lives of those who profess to be followers and ministers of Christ. Will the rising tide recede without our taking it at the flood? It is an exhilaration to live when the tide is coming in. The world is longing with an indefinable craving for some union with God. Who will put on Christ that they may know their Savior? Will we? May we all prove faithful to the greatest mission of Christ, the reign and rule of Christ from ocean to ocean, until His cross towers over every dome and steeple, and His gospel is preached in every church, and His sacramental Presence is adored by every bowed head and fervent heart; until His commandments are kept in every home, in every mart of trade, and in every hall of legislation; until His counsels become alluring ideals to countless youths and maidens; until all His enemies are won over and the spirit of Christ animates every heart in the land.